

The Athenian Mercury:

Tuesday, September 26 1693.

Quest. 1. **W**Hether can I most Advantage my self by, Reading or Conversation?

Ans. The Advantages you may receive by these two Methods of Instruction, are of a different kind: Reading seems more comprehensive, for 'tis much easier to read (for Example) in a Law-Case, what has been the Opinion of perhaps twenty Men, than 'twould be Personally to Consult two or three on the same Occasion — But still it must be own'd, that asking Counsel of the Dead only, is but a Melancholly Employment; Reading alone is a dead way of Instruction, and has besides this Inconvenience, that the Author always speaking last, suppose in any Controversie, we are apt to be Prejudic'd to the same side or Sentiments he espoules. Reading much may indeed accomplish a Man both for Writing and Thinking, affording him Notion and Matter to work upon, but 'tis little advantage in his Speaking, unless he has Conversation to refine him, and teach him how to Practise what he has learnt. 'Tis true, that promiscuous Reading, without Choice, or Prudence, or Method, rather confounds than betters the Judgment — but there's the same Inconvenience in Conversation: The latter makes a Person finer, the other wiser, more eminently we mean, not excluding the other. For we see every day Instances of such as have found their Minds strangely greaten'd, and their Capacities enlarg'd by coming into Business; nor can there be any more pleasant way of Instruction than that of Ingenious Converse. On the whole, whether we take Conversation or Reading in a promiscuous Sense, one with 'other, or only the choice and best of both, 'tis our Judgment that the Advantages from both are equal, and therefore both must meet to form an Accomplish'd Person.

Quest. 2. Whether is there such a real Virtue in Jewels as is reported?

Ans. Who doubts the Virtues of Jewels, unless we'll be so unkind to think the Pantarbe of Chariclea, the of Gonzales, and the Ring of Gyges, to be all Errand Fables. The Amethyst, as the Name plainly enough shows, will keep you Sober, but the way of making use on't, is to hold it exactly between your Teeth, and while 'tis there 'twill certainly keep you from Gluttony as well as Drunkenness. A fine Emerald refreshes the Eyes strangely — if we find it among Pebbles, as many have done; and most other Jewels have a strange and undoubted Virtue in procuring Love, if scattered but as plentifully as Jupiter's Shower of Gold: And besides, have a strange Attractive Virtue in 'em, and like Mahomet's Mountain, will draw People after 'em very powerfully, though they are themselves so sturdy, that they'll not stir a Foot to meet 'em.

Quest. 3. May I venture on the Freedom to Reprove or Chide a Spirit or Damon, if they give the first Occasion of Offence, or disturb my quiet?

Ans. First, be sure you don't Slander the poor Devil, and that 'tis not Imprison'd Puffs, or some of your Carterwauling-Servants that disturb your House, while the Fairies and Robin Good-fellow are Innocent. If you are satisfied in that Point, the least thing you can do, is to ask Mr. Devil, what his Business is? what he makes there? and why he keeps such a Clutter you can't Sleep for him? — and if he can't give a handsom Account of himself, We see no Reason why you mayn't Reprove him for his Sawciness, tho' have a Care of being Rude with him, using any Actionable Words, for he's a very testy angry Fellow, and will be likely enough to take the Law of you; and at Common-Law you are certainly cast, for you'll not get one Att — to Undertake your

Business against him. To be grave, you do not positively assert any Fact, and 'till you do that, 'tis hardly worth the while to Answer your Question any other-wise.

Quest. 4. I am the Young Squire of Bristol, I give you Service and Thanks, for your last favour and kindness in answering some few of my Questions. I humbly presume as I'm in Duty bound, not only to return my Thanks for the last, but to crave your Pardon for troubling you at this Present — But 'tis my Fancy, and if you deny me this Favour, and this Honour I crave and desire in having my Follies answer'd, I shall value the Pleasures of this World as nothing, and all my Lands, Paternal Estate, and Worldly Blessings, as little as nothing; nay I would sooner sustain Jobs Loss, than be balk'd in my Fancy, and suffer under the Loss of your Kindness. Therefore pray gratifie me once more in the Answering these following Queries, which will please me better than a fine Crop of Corn or a good Harvest.

Query. Whether a Lawyer mayn't live as well and as innocently before God as Men of any other Employment?

Ans. First to your Letter. Dear Squire! And is it possible we have so ingenious and judicious a Person, who admires us at such a distance, almost cross the whole length of England? Well, now and then we see that Jade Fortune gives us Sugar-plumbs, as well as Raps o' the Knuckles, and while such as you — Sir — Master of such Candor and Ingenuity, such Prudence and Sagacity, such, such, nay, such, Non-such Goodness and Sweetness, and Kindness, and Mildness, &c. Sir we are in a perfect Extasie, and remember nothing else but that we are, your Humbles.

To your Query, May a Lawyer live as honestly as one of any other Employment? We answer, 1. Many things are possible in themselves, that is, involve no Contradiction, that yet are not so according to the present settled Course, and order of things. To a Power above Nature tho' not Acting in the ordinary course of Nature, as making a new World, giving a Man Wings, &c. or to come yet lower, many things are possible even in the ordinary course of things, and usual Chain of Causes and Effects, which yet are not Future, that is, never will be, tho' they might be: As for Example, you Squire, might send up a small Runlet or two of Bristol-milk to the Royal Exchange for all the Merchants there to drink the Healths of your wise Self, and the as wise Athenians; they might pledge you too, and a thousand May-bees else, which since they're never like to go any further, we leave 'em just where they are, and let they and your Question e'en shift it between 'em.

Quest. 5. What is worse than Ingratitude?

Ans. — o —

Quest. 6. Gentlemen, Reading of Titus Livius's Roman History, Book 44. the 22d Chap. being the Speech or Oration of Lucius Aemilius the Consul, to the People after he was Elected, and by Lot had the Kingdom of Macedonia for his Province, and going to make a just War upon Perseus there King: Romans, &c. says he, What I shall Write to the Senate or you, pray believe me only; and do not by your Credulity, entertain Rumours, for which you have no good Authority, for even at this time I have observed, it hath been a common Infirmary among you, especially since the beginning of this War, that no Man slight a vulgar report so much as not to be discouraged at it. There are in all Companies, and at all feasts (forsooth) those, that lead Armies into Macedonia: Know where the Camp should be pitched, what places should be made Garisons of, when, and at what Pals we ought to enter Macedonia, where our

Store.

Store-houses ought to be built, what way, either by Land or Sea, our Provision should be brought, when we ought to engage the Enemy, when to lie still; nor do they only tell us, how we may do better than ordinary, but also, whatsoever is done otherwise than they directed, they make as it were an Actual Accusation against the Consul; now these things (*Romans*) are a great Obstruction to men, that are to manage such great Affairs; for all men cannot be of so firm and constant a Resolution against false Rumours, as *Fabius* was who chose rather to have his own Conduct disparaged by the false Rumours of the People, than to preserve his Reputation, and neglect the Publick Business. I am not one that thinks Commanders ought not to be Admonished; yea I look on him, that does all things on his own Head, to be rather a proud than a wise man.

What then remains? Why first of all, Commanders ought to be Admonished by wise men, and more especially, those that have skill in Military Affairs: and next, by such as are concern'd upon the Spot, who see the Enemy, the occasion of Action, and are partakers (as it were) of the danger; wherefore if there be any man that believes, he can certainly advise me to any thing that may conduce to the better management of that War, that I am now to wage; let him not deny his Assistance to the Common-wealth, but come along with me into *Macedonia*, he shall be furnished by me with a Ship, Horse, Tent, and Provision for the Voyage: but if any man be loth so to do, and prefers the ease of a City Life before the Toils of a Campaign, let him not fear at Land, the City it self affords matter enough for Discourse, let him keep his Tattle within his Teeth; and know that we'll be Content with our Campaign Council.

Querv. *Whether our General has not occasion for such, or a more sharp Answer to the Coffee-house Politicians of this Age?*

Ans. If he has not, they have; and therefore we have Printed it, as a very useful Passage.

Quest. 7. *Of all Callings and Employments, which in your Opinion is the most Cleanly, Neat and Genteel?*

Ans. The most Cleanly is the Dust-Cart-Man, the Neatest the Barber, the Genteelest the Taylor.

Quest. 8. *What is Time?*

Ans. We'll give you our own Notion of it; and it may, We think, be thus tolerably describ'd — 'Tis the Duration of a Creature, measur'd by the Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies. Duration, and that successive, because 'tis of a Creature, whereby First, The *to vnu*, the present Moment is excluded, being only the Term of Time, not Time it self; and then it's imply'd that Time is incompatible with an *Uncreated Being*, who, as all sound Philosophers and Divines have ever held, is *simul & semel*, has no Succession, no Parallax, or Tropical Conversion, (which we render, no variableness, nor Shadow of turning): By Creature here, we mean all Created Beings, the whole System or Frame of *Visibles*, and even *Invisibles*, which ever began to be. Time in General being the complex Measure of their Duration, taken from End to End, and the best particular Measure we have of this Duration being the repeated Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies, so that if there were any Created Beings before the World was made, as 'tis not improbable, but there were, at least *Angels*, we can in general apply Successive Duration to their Existence, tho' 'tis own'd we can't the Measure of any Heavenly or Earthly Bodies, actual Revolution, because then no such Bodies, tho' like the *Julian Period*, we can set the Watch a little backward, and make Time intrude upon Eternity in Supposition, we mean so as to say there were so many Actual Durations, so many Instants pass'd from their Creation, to the Creation of the World, as would have made so many Days or Years, greater or less than any number given.

Quest. 9. *What is Thought?*

Ans. It will Cost us some before We can tell you; 'tis the *Act* of the Mind, or rather the Effect of that Act, and *Ens Rationis*, produc'd by reflex, the very

Working of the Soul, as being of the Essence of Mind, or immaterial Substance, and consequently is actually inseparable from it, without annihilation. Tho' this very Effect is not to be Discover'd without particular Reflexion, we often enough Thinking at Rovers, without knowing precisely what We think of, unless we actually rouse our Minds and reflect upon it.

Advertisements.

A Peaceable Inquiry into the Nature of the Present Controversie among the United Brethren: Containing the Excellency of Peace and Love; *Luther's* Opinion of it. The Mischief of Strifes and Contentions in the Church, instanced in the Rise and Progress of the *Militians* and *Arrians*: The Cure difficult, yet Necessary to be endeavour'd: The Improvement to be made of former Divisions. An Enquiry into the present Controversie, whether about the Substance of Truth, or the Manner only of Declaring it: That great Divisions have been among such as have agreed in the same Principles. This the present Case among the United Brethren proved; with several other particulars. Written by Stephen Lobb, a Lover of Peace and Truth. Price Bound 1 s. 6 d.

MEMOIRS of the Right Honourable *ARTHUR* late Earl of *ANGLESEY*, late Lord Privy Seal, intermixt with Moral, Political and Historical Observations, &c. To which is prefixt a Letter written by his Lordship during his Retirement from Court in the Year 1683. Published by Sir Peter Pett, Kt. Advocate General for the Kingdom of Ireland.

Mensalia Sacra: Or Meditations on the Lords Supper; wherein the Nature of the Holy Sacrament is Explained, and the most weighty Cases of Conscience about it are Resolved. By the Reverend Mr. Francis Crow, late Minister of the Gospel at Clare in Suffolk. To which is prefixt a brief Account of the Author's Life and Death. By Mr. Henry Curtis.

Comforts for Parents, Mourning over their Hopefull Children that Dye Young. By Thomas Whitaker, Minister of the Gospel at Leeds in York-shire: With a Prefatory Epistle by Timothy Rogers, M. A.

An Earnest Call to Family Reformation: By a Reverend Divine. Price 6 d. single, or 50 of 'em for 20 s. to those Gentlemen that buy them to disperse.

A Further Account of the Tryals of the New-England WITCHES, with the Observation of a Person who was upon the Place several Days, when the suspected Witches were first taken into Examination: To which is added Cases of Conscience concerning Witchcrafts and Evil Spirits personating Men. Written at the Request of the Ministers of New-England. By Increase Mather, President of Harvard-Colledge Price 1 s.

All six Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry.

A New Book of Trade, Entitled, *Panarithmologia*, being a Mirror for Merchants, a Breviate for Bankers, a Treasure for Tradesmen, a Mate for Mechanicks, and a sure Guide for Purchasers, Sellers or Mortgagers of Land, Leases, Annuities, Rents, Pensions, &c. in present Possession or Reversion, and a constant Concomitant fitted for all Men's Occasions. In Three Parts. All Performed by Tables ready cast up: Which Tables are made Easie by Variety of Examples. By William Leybourn, Author of *Cursus Mathematicus*. To which is added a Necessary Appendix, containing Heads of daily Use to all Traders.

Printed for J. Dunton at the Raven, and J. Harris at the Harrow in the Poultry.

In *Grays-Inn-lane* in *Plow-yard*, the third Door, lives Dr. Thomas Kirleus, a Collegiate Physician, and Sworn Physician in Ordinary to King Charles the Second, until his death; who with a Drink and Pill (hindring no Business) undertakes to Cure any Ulcers, Sores, Swellings in the Nose, Face, or other parts; Scabs, Itch, Scurfs, Leprosies, and Venereal Disease, expecting nothing until the Cure be finished: Of the last he hath cured many hundreds in this City, many of them after fluxing, which carries the evil from the Lower Parts to the Head, and so destroys many. The Drink is 3 s. the Quart, the Pill 1 s. a Box, with Directions; a better Purger than which was never given, for they cleanse the Body of all Impurities, which are the causes of Dropsies, Gouts, Scurvies, Stone or Gravel, Pains in the Head, and other parts. Take heed whom you Trust in Physick, for it's become a Common Cheat to profess it. He gives his Opinion to all that writes or comes for nothing.